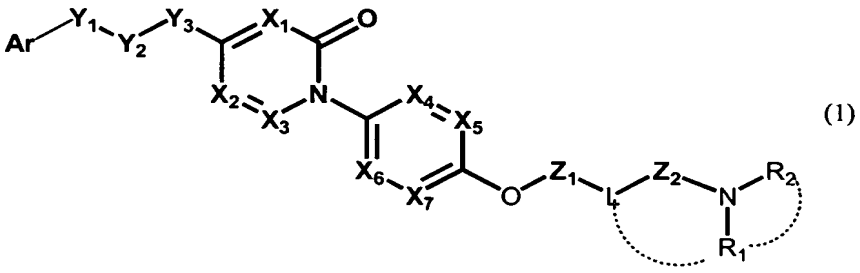
IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-25 (cancelled).

Add the following Claims 26-51:

26. A compound of formula (I):



(1)

wherein:

R_1 and R_2 are the same or different and are each independently selected from: hydrogen, optionally substituted lower alkyl, optionally substituted lower cycloalkyl, optionally substituted lower alkylcarbonyl, optionally substituted lower alkyloxycarbonyl and optionally substituted lower alkylsulfonyl; or R_1 and R_2 form an optionally substituted aliphatic nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group together with the nitrogen atom to which they bind;

X_1, X_2 and X_3 are the same or different and are each independently selected from: optionally substituted methine and nitrogen atom, provided not all of X_1, X_2 and X_3 simultaneously stand for nitrogen;

X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are the same or different and are each independently selected from: optionally substituted methine and nitrogen, provided that three or more of X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are not simultaneously nitrogen;

Y_1 is selected from: a single bond, –O–, –NR–, –S–, –SO–, and $–SO_2–$;

Y_2 is selected from: optionally substituted lower alkylene, optionally substituted lower alkenylene, and optionally substituted lower cycloalkylene;

Y_3 is selected from: a single bond, –O–, –NR–, –S–, –SO–, and $–SO_2–$;

R is selected from: hydrogen and optionally substituted lower alkyl;

L is optionally substituted methylene;

Z_1 and Z_2 are the same or different and are each independently selected from: a single bond and optionally substituted lower alkylene; or

R_1, L and Z_2 together form an optionally substituted aliphatic nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group with the nitrogen to which R_1 binds; and

Ar stands for an optionally substituted aromatic carbocyclic group, optionally substituted heteroaromatic group or optionally substituted aliphatic carbocyclic group; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

27. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein X_1, X_2 and X_3 are each an optionally substituted methine group; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

28. The compound according to Claim 27, wherein X_1, X_2 and X_3 are each an unsubstituted methine group; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

29. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein one of X_1, X_2 and X_3 is a nitrogen atom and the other two are optionally substituted methine groups; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

30. The compound according to Claim 29, wherein one of X_1, X_2 and X_3 is a nitrogen atom and the other two are unsubstituted methine groups; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

31. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are each optionally substituted methine groups; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

32. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein Y_1 is selected from a single bond and –O–; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

33. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein Y_2 is selected from optionally substituted methylene, optionally substituted ethylene, and optionally substituted vinylene; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

34. The compound according to Claims 26, wherein Y_3 is selected from a single bond and –O–; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

35. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein Z_1 is selected from a single bond or optionally substituted methylene; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

36. The compound according to Claim 35, wherein L is optionally substituted methylene; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

37. The compound according to Claim 35, wherein Z_2 is selected from a single bond and optionally substituted methylene; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

38. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein R_1, L, and Z_2, together with the nitrogen to which R_1 binds, form an optionally substituted pyrrolidine ring or an optionally substituted piperidine ring; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

39. The compound according to Claim 38, wherein R_2 is selected from: hydrogen, optionally substituted $C_1 - C_4$ alkyl, and optionally substituted $C_3 - C_5$ cycloalkyl; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

40. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein R_1 and R_2 are each independently selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted $C_1 - C_4$ alkyl, and optionally substituted $C_3 - C_5$ cycloalkyl; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

41. The compound according to Claim 26, wherein R_1 and R_2, together with the nitrogen atom to which they bind, form an optionally substituted pyrrolidine ring or an optionally substituted piperidine ring; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

42. The compound according to Claim 26, in which Ar is selected from optionally substituted phenyl and optionally substituted pyridinyl; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

43. The compound according to Claim 42, wherein the optional Ar substituent is selected from the group consisting of fluorine, chlorine, methyl, ethyl, hydroxyl, methoxy, ethoxy, trifluoromethyl, difluoromethoxy and trifluoromethoxy, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

44. The compound according to Claim 30, wherein:
X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are each optionally substituted methine groups,
Y_1 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Y_2 is selected from optionally substituted methylene, optionally substituted ethylene, and optionally substituted vinylene,

Y_3 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Z_1 is selected from a single bond and optionally substituted methylene,
L is optionally substituted methylene,
Z_2 is selected from a single bond and optionally substituted methylene,
R_1 and R_2 are each independently selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted $C_1 - C_4$ alkyl, and optionally substituted $C_3 - C_5$ cycloalkyl, and
Ar is selected from an optionally substituted phenyl and an optionally substituted pyridinyl, wherein the optional Ar substituent is selected from the group consisting of fluorine, chlorine, methyl, ethyl, hydroxyl, methoxy, ethoxy, trifluoromethyl, difluoromethoxy, and trifluoromethoxy;
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

45. The compound according to Claim 30, wherein:
X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are each optionally substituted methine groups,
Y_1 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Y_2 is selected from optionally substituted methylene, optionally substituted ethylene, and optionally substituted vinylene,
Y_3 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Z_1 is selected from a single bond, and optionally substituted methylene,
R_1, L, and Z_2, together with the nitrogen to which R_1 binds, form an optionally substituted pyrrolidine ring or an optionally substituted piperidine ring,
R_2 is selected from hydrogen, optionally substituted $C_1 - C_4$ alkyl, and optionally substituted $C_3 - C_5$ cycloalkyl, and
Ar is selected from an optionally substituted phenyl, and an optionally substituted pyridinyl, wherein the optional Ar substituent is selected from the group consisting of fluorine, chlorine, methyl, ethyl, hydroxyl, methoxy, ethoxy, trifluoromethyl, difluoromethoxy and trifluoromethoxy;
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

46. The compound according to Claim 30, wherein:
X_4, X_5, X_6 and X_7 are each optionally substituted methine groups,
Y_1 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Y_2 is selected from optionally substituted methylene, optionally substituted ethylene, and optionally substituted vinylene,
Y_3 is selected from a single bond and –O–,
Z_1 is selected from a single bond and optionally substituted methylene,
L is optionally substituted methylene,
Z_2 is selected from a single bond and optionally substituted methylene,

R_1 and R_2 together with the nitrogen atom to which they bind, form an optionally substituted pyrrolidine ring or an optionally substituted piperidine ring, and
Ar is selected from optionally substituted phenyl, and optionally substituted pyridinyl,
wherein the optional Ar substituent is selected from the group consisting of fluorine, chlorine, methyl, ethyl, hydroxyl, methoxy, ethoxy, trifluoromethyl, difluoromethoxy, and trifluoromethoxy; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

47. A compound according to Claim 26, selected from the group consisting of:
4-benzyloxy-1-{4-[2-(dimethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-benzyloxy-1-{4-[2-(diethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
1-{4-[2-(diethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-4-(4-fluorobenzyloxy)-1*H*-pyridin-2- one,
4-(4-fluorobenzyloxy)-1-{4-[2-(diethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyrimidin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[2-(dimethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[2-(diethylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{2-[ethyl(methyl)amino]ethoxy}-phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{2-[isopropyl(methyl)amino]-ethoxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-(4-fluorobenzyloxy)-1-(4-{2-[isopropyl(methyl)amino]ethoxy}phenyl)-1*H*- pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[2-(isopropylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{2-[(2*R*)-2-butylamino]ethoxy}- phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{2-[(2*S*)-2-butylamino]ethoxy}- phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
and
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[2-(cyclopentylamino)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

48. A compound according to Claim 26, selected from the group consisting of:
4-benzyloxy-1-(4-{[(2*S*)-1-methyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]methoxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*R*)-2-(diethylamino)propoxy]-phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*S*)-2-(diethylamino)propoxy]-phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(2*S*)-1-isopropyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]-methoxy}phenyl-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(2*S*)-1-methyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]-methoxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(2*S*)-1-ethyl-2-pyrrolidinyl]-methoxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*R*)-2-(dimethylamino)propoxy]-phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,

4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*S*)-2-(dimethylamino)propoxy]-phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*R*)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)propoxy]-phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
and
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[(2*S*)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-propoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

49. A compound according to Claim 26, selected from the group consisting of:
4-benzyloxy-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-(4-fluorobenzyloxy)-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(E)-2-(4-fluorophenyl)vinyl]-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(E)-2-phenylvinyl]-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-(4-chlorobenzyloxy)-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-(4-fluorobenzyloxy)-1-{4-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethoxy]phenyl}-1*H*-pyrimidin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(3*R*)-1-isopropyl-3-pyrrolidinyl]-oxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(3*R*)-1-ethyl-3-pyrrolidinyl]oxy}-phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one, and
4-[(5-chloro-2-pyridinyl)methoxy]-1-(4-{[(3*R*)-1-methyl-3-pyrrolidinyl]-oxy}phenyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one,
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

50. A composition comprising a compound according to Claim 26, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

51. A method of preventing or treating a condition selected from: obesity, diabetes, hormone disorder, hyperlipidemia, gout, fatty liver, stenocardia, acute heart failure, congestive heart failure, myocardial infarction, coronary atherosclerosis, hypertension, renal diseases, electrolyte abnormality, bulimia, emotional disturbance, depression, anxiety, epilepsy, delirium, dementia, schizophrenia, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, memory impairment, sleep disorders, cognitive failure, dyskinesia, paresthesias, smell disorders, morphine tolerance, drug dependence, alcoholism, infertility, preterm labor, sexual dysfunction; digestive disorders; respiratory disorders; cancer, pigmentation, in a subject in need of such prevention or treatment comprising administration of prophylactically or therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 26.